1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

a surplus to barter with the Moormen on their annual visit, or to take into the nearest Sinhalese village to exchange for iron, cloth, pots and occasional rice and coconuts.

Plate XIII represents the women of this group, the plates on which the men were photographed were accidentally destroyed shortly after we left Sitala Wanniya. Handuna whose height was 1·530 mm. (60¼ inches) looked a typical Vedda; Vela who was two inches taller also had a Vedda physiognomy though his appearance was not so typical; Kaira and Pema both looked as though they were of mixed blood, and Nila, height 1·555 mm. (61¼ inches), shown in Plate LV, would certainly not be taken for a Vedda at all.

Neither the assurance of a regular supply of food, nor the apathy produced by gradual starvation, had caused them to neglect their old ceremonies, and we found that once these people had overcome their shyness they were communicative, extremely courteous and merry. When the men understood they were free to come to our camp whenever they liked and that areca nut and betel leaves were always ready for them, they granted us the same freedom of their own cave, only stipulating that we should never allow our servants to go near it.

When they first led us to their cave we noticed that they stopped and shouted when about a quarter of a mile distant and did not proceed until an answering shout was heard. This they said was their custom and was equally observed whether they were accompanied by strangers or not. The place at which they stopped was their usual dancing ground as well as the spot on which pedlars were received and barter carried on, for strangers were never allowed to approach their caves or see their women.

Galmede. A family of Veddas of the Galmede group, seen at Godatalawa, consisted of ten persons who had left their old home in the Nuwaragala Hills, and who appeared to be moderately pure-blooded. The old man of the community proved a good informant, remembering a considerable number of old customs and invocations, but he was not a shaman, and as there was not one in the community most of the customs had fallen into desuetude. The members of this community were living on a very poor chena and, when we saw them, were in great difficulties as

[Erratum, see p. xx. — Analyst]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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In concluding these remarks on property we may refer to the list given by Rutimeyer (*Globus* 1903) of Vedda objects of personal property in the Basle Museum, these are: 422

(i) Bow and ordinary arrows with iron heads of different sizes.
(ii) Elephant arrows (i.e. ceremonial arrows or *anale*).
(iii) Simple sharpened wood arrows.
(iv) Boy's bow with wooden arrows, being an exact facsimile of the iron tipped arrows.
(v) Axes.
(vi) Digging sticks.
(vii) Drill for producing fire.
(viii) Apron made of the bast of *Antiaris toxicaria* (*riti* bark).
(ix) Tortoise shell from the Danigala used as a dish.
(x) Disc of wax from wild bees (trading asset).
(xi) Ball of bast cord for bow strings.
(xii) Fire lighting appliances with hollowed areca nut for keeping tinder.
(xiii) Earthenware pot hanging in a bast net.
(xiv) Pouch made of squirrel skin.
(xv) Kilt made of leaves.

To this Rutimeyer would add a *riti* bark bag, the message stick referred to in the anonymous report of 1820, printed by Le Mesurier[1], and clay figures and marbles mentioned by Stevens, in order to have "a rather complete inventory of all utensils of the 'Nature Veddas.'" This list, however, omits dried deer skins and the skin and wooden honey-collecting utensils described in Chapter XI. Further, no mention is made of beads, which are certainly much appreciated by even the wilder Veddas (cf. Chapter XI).

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[1] "The Veddas of Ceylon," by C. J. R. Le Mesurier, *Journal Roy. As. Soc., Ceylon Branch*, Vol. IX, 1886. The statement referred to will be found on p. 347 and runs as follows:—"They are totally unacquainted with letters, but the different tribes hold a rude correspondence with each other with small pieces of wood cut into different shapes. Fugitives used to be furnished with passports of this kind, when they removed from one tribe to another, and the treatment they received depended on the recommendation which the talisman conveyed."

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-S (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

With regard to the existence of message sticks mentioned in the last paragraph, very careful inquiries were made of Veddas, Sinhalese peasants and Sinhalese headmen, including Mr Bibile, Ratemahatmaya. There seemed no doubt that among the peasant Sinhalese messages were traditionally transmitted by the conveyance of certain objects. We are unable to say whether this system was ever well developed and applied to many of the emergencies of life, but it seemed to be the general impression among our informants that the practice was formerly more common than at present. We were able, however, to hear of two messages habitually sent in this way among the more backward jungle Sinhalese at the present day. The first of these was the transmission of a piece of creeper with one, two, or three knots tied in it. This was sent wrapped in a fragment of cloth and was a call to the recipient to come to the sender, the urgency of the latter's need being indicated by the number of knots. We consider the use of this message object thoroughly established as a Sinhalese custom, it was in use in the neighbourhood of Bibile until recently and is still used in remoter jungle districts.

A lock of hair usually cut from the head of the dead man and twisted round a small stick and wrapped in a leaf or fragment of cloth was sent as a sign that a death had occurred. Our impression is that at the present day this is essentially a Sinhalese custom, for the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde told us that among the jungle Sinhalese when a man died away from his home, his people might be informed of his death in this way. We could not hear of this custom among the least sophisticated of the Veddas we met, though it was said to exist at Henebedda, where however, if it really occurred, it may have been due to Sinhalese influence. With regard to its existence among the Veddas apart from Sinhalese influence, it seemed to us that the importance of a lock of hair as evidence of land transfer (described on p. 114) renders it unlikely that hair would be sent as evidence of death. The care that the Vedda Arachi of Potuliyadde took when bringing me his "seisin" to photograph, of which a lock of hair was an important part, was very noticeable[1].

[1] On the other hand the custom may have been derived from the Vedda practice,

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Plate XXIV

Stones wrinkled on edge of back used as axe [illegible]

[facing p. 120]

1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
AX5 Vedda AX5

Turning now to the message sticks, certain conventional signs scratched on leaves or flat slips of wood were at times sent by Sinhalese chiefs to the Veddas as an intimation that they required them to bring venison and honey. These signs always took one form, representing a carrying stick (*pinga*), to each end of which a circular object representing a pot of honey was attached. By the side of the pot of honey there were generally drawn two short vertical lines, immediately beneath which were a number of rather longer horizontal lines. Each pair of horizontal lines represented a joint of venison and the vertical lines immediately above them the cord by which they would be suspended from the *pinga*. As far as we could determine no other form of written message ever passed between the Sinhalese and Veddas, but there is no doubt that although the Sitala Wanniya Veddas knew nothing of such messages the Danigala Veddas recognised their meaning and acted on them. Mr Bibile told us that on one occasion when he had sent this message scratched on an *ola* leaf to the headman of the Danigala Veddas he had received the honey and venison he had asked for in about a week. We were told that on receiving this message a Vedda might say

Dik, dik, eawwā; hac kuṭṭā
Wāṭa kava eawwā; pasai muṭṭā[1]
Kota kota eawwā; mas kuṭṭā[2].

Long long (ones I) have sent; cut pingos
Round (ones I) have sent; honey pots
Short short (ones I) have sent; cut meat.

and apparent this modified to suit the convenience of the present Sinhalese who, as already mentioned, have much Vedda blood in them.

[1] *Muṭṭa* may be a verb, *muṭṭiya* is a pot.

[2] *Kuṭṭa* appears to be derived from v. *kuttanawā*, to chop or cut; compare colloquial *kuwā*, "I have drunk," from v. *kunnawā* and other instances. We are indebted to Mr Parker for these notes as well as for the transliteration and translation of the message.